

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

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INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARGUES

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SCUL, PO

SUBJ: TRIAL OF FEMINIST WRITERS

REF: LISBON A-150 OF AUGUST 15, 1973

SUMMARY: TRIAL OF THREE FEMINIST WRITERS AND THEIR
PUBLISHER ON OBSCENITY CHARGES OPENED OCTOBER 25, DRAWING
AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN FEMINISTS AND WRITERS TO COURTROOM.
AFTER ONE DAY-LONG SESSION, JUDGE POSTPONED TRIAL
UNTIL JANUARY 31. END SUMMARY

1. TRIAL OF THREE FEMINIST WRITERS AND THEIR PUBLISHER
ON OBSCENITY CHARGES STEMMING FROM CONTROVERSIAL BOOK ENTITLED
NEW PORTUGUESE LETTERS OPENED OCT 25 (FOR BACKGROUND
SEE REFAIR). EVENT BROUGHT REPRESENTATIVES FROM FRENCH,
BRITISH, AND AMERICAN FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS, REP FROM
PEN WRITERS' ORGANIZATION, SEVERAL WRITERS AND CRITICS,
AND DOZEN REPORTERS FROM U.S., U.K., FRANCE, GERMANY,
SPAIN, ITALY AND PERHAPS OTHER COUNTRIES. (SOME
OF JOURNALISTS, LIKE NY TIMES REP GININGER, WERE IN
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LISBON ANYWAY TO COVER ELECTION.) CBS TV CREW WITH ROBERT

TROUT ALSO ON HAND. FESTIVE ATMOSPHERE PREVAILED OUTSIDE COURT-
HOUSE IN HEART OF LISBON FOR HALF HOURS PRECEEDING TRIAL, WITH
DEFENDANTS GIVING INTERVIEWS TO JOURNALISTS AND BEING PHOTOGRAPHED.
SPECTACLE AMUSED PASSERSBY WHO UNUSED TO SUCH DOINGS.

2. WHEN TRIAL OPENED, JUDGE INVOKED LAW WHICH ALLOWS
PRIVATE SESSIONS IN CASES INVOLVING LURID MATTERS,
SAYING THAT TESTIMONY WOULD INVOLVE OBSCENE LANGUAGE
IMPROPER FOR PUBLIC FORUM. HE DIRECTED OBSERVERS TO
LEAVE; THE DID SO QUIETLY.

3. DEFENSE HAS ABOUT THIRTY EXPERT WITNESSES ON CALL,
INCLUDING SEVERAL OF PORTUGAL'S MOST PROMINENT WRITERS AND
FEW FROM ABROAD. SEVERAL DEFENSE WITNESSES ARE WELL-KNOWN
OPPOSITIONIST LEADERS; ONE, JOSE TENGARRINHA, WAS CDE
CANDIDATE.

4. FIRST DAY OF TRIAL TAKEN UP WITH QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES
BY PROSECUTOR AND JUDGE AND RELATED SKIRMISHES BY LAWYERS,
WHO ALSO INCLUDE SEVERAL WELL-KNOWN FIGURES. AT END OF
SESSION, JUDGE ANNOUNCED TRIAL WOULD CONTINUE JAN. 31.

5. COMMENT: HOLDING TRIAL IN CLOSED SESSION
HAS GIVEN INTERNATIONAL PRESS A STORY, AND THREE-MONTH
POSTPONEMENT HAS SENT FOREIGN OBSERVERS HOME AGAIN.
POST

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